

Kwento mula sa looban: Situwasyon ng mga kababaihan sa  
kulungan

Mga Katanungan para sa Focus Group Discussion- LGBT

28 August 2019

Butuan City Jail

FGD Report by:

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## **Overview**

As a national human rights institution, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) is mandated to conduct jail visitations and monitor the situations of both those in detention and prison. This is regularly done under the CHR- Visitorial Services Division and its regional offices including CHR-Caraga. In accordance to the Magna Carta of Women, the Gender Ombud also assigned the CHR to strengthen the access of human rights among women regardless of gender, disabilities, and age. Thus, the the Promotion and Monitoring Division (PMD) of CHR-Caraga organized a set of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) for women at the Butuan City Jail, Barangay Libertad, Butuan City last 28 August 2019.

This report is committed to the independent FGD for Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Women in detention. The facilitator, Atty. Euvic M. Ferrer, discussed and explained the objectives of this FGD. Thereafter, distributed a consent form and attendance sheet to be filled up by the participants.

## **Profile of the LGBT Women**

The group was composed of three (3) Lesbians from Butuan City Jail and four (4) Transgender Women from Provincial Jail.

# Summary of Discussions

## I. Pagpapakilala

Question	Answer	Issues
<p>A. Alin sa mga emosyon ang iyong pangkaraniwang batid sa pang-araw-araw dito sa bilangguan? (Bawat babae ay may 2 sticker, ilagay sa 2 emosyon na madalas nararamdaman sa loob ng kulungan)</p>	<p>Most of the participants answered sad (“gimingaw”) and worried (“naguol”).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sad (“gimingaw”)</li> </ul> <p>One participant said that she is sad because she missed her mother so much who is now old and deaf.</p> <p>Have not seen any of her family member for a long time.</p> <p>Unable to see her girlfriend who is also a prisoner for it is prohibited inside the jail for an inmate to have an intimate relationship with other inmates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Worried (“naguol”)</li> </ul> <p>One of the participant made mentioned about the delays of her trial. For six (6) years, her case was still on Pre-trial with 25 resetting.</p> <p>Unable to talk with their respective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stress about having no guarantee if they can still be freed from jail</li> <li>● Anxiety of the condition of their family outside</li> </ul>

	<p>lawyers for update/status of their case.</p> <p>Worried about what will tomorrow bring.</p> <p>Condition of their families outside.</p>	
<p>B. Bilang LBT (lesbian, bisexual o transgender) sa loob ng kulungan, ano ang pinaka-maigting na issue ang iyong kinakaharap sa loob ng kulungan?</p>	<p>One of the participant answered that sometimes she felt being discriminated by some of the jail guards because of being an LBT.</p> <p>Concerned about the condition of their families outside.</p> <p>Worried about the status of their case.</p>	

## II. Kalagayan sa Kulungan para sa LBT

QUESTION	ANSWER	ISSUES
<p>A. Pagkain, Tubig at Espasyo</p> <p>1. Sapat ba ang supply ng pagkain at tubig sa loob ng kulungan? Ang espasyo?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Food (Pagkain)</li> </ul> <p>Most of the participant from the City Jail answered that the food is not enough and it is not that delicious while on the side of the participants from the provincial jail, food supply is very much okay.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Not enough food supply and inconsistent taste and quality of food.</li> </ul>

<p>2. Ano ang kondisyon ng palikuran? (komportable ba kayong nakakaligo etc)</p> <p>B. Paano ka naapektuhan ng kalagayan sa kulungan bilang lesbyana, biseksual, o transgender?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Water (Tubig) Before, we used to drink from the faucet coming from Butuan City Water District but it was later found out to be contaminated which have caused one of the inmates to be hospitalized.</li> </ul> <p>Mineral water is for sale.</p> <p>Inadequate water supply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Space (Espasyo) Very tight bed space</li> </ul> <p>We build our own bed (they call it taripa)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Condition of the restrooms</li> </ul> <p>There are comfort rooms provided in each cell</p> <p>They have rotational water supply, only 2 hours per cell.</p> <p>Cleaning materials (i.e soap, zonrox) are not given free, inmates buy for it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Because of tight space and being lesbians they are not allowed to sleep with single women but only with elderly women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Water safety, tap water is not potable</li> <li>● Safeness of the building structure</li> <li>● Inadequate water supply</li> <li>● Discrimination of being lesbian</li> </ul>
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<p>C. Ang iyong selda ba bilang kilalang LBT ay nakahiwaly sa mga kababaihan?</p> <p>D. Kung oo, tanggap niyo ba ang paghihiwalay na ito?</p> <p>E. May particular ba na polisiya ang kulungan patungkol sa mga babaeng nag-iibigan o nagkakarelasyon sa kapwa babae sa loob ng kulungan?</p> <p>F. Bilang LBT sa loob ng kulungan, ano ang pinakamahirap na karanasan para sa iyo?</p>	<p>Just recently, lesbians are separated from women’s cell while trans women are still in the same cell with men</p> <p>Most of the lesbians answered yes because they have no choice but to follow and respect orders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes they have, they are not allowed to engage in an intimate relationship with other inmates and if ever they are caught there will be a corresponding punishment.</li> </ul> <p>Just because they have identified themselves as lesbians, they are expected to lift/carry heavy things (i.e lifting tables and chairs, sand and gravel, etc)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We built our own bed so if we are going to be transferred to another cell, we cannot bring our bed with us for it was attached to the wall.</li> <li>• What is the problem with having a relationship with other inmates if they know their limitations? Another form of discrimination.</li> <li>• Felt degraded every time the jail guards instruct the trustees, “Ilabas ang mga junjun” to carry heavy stuff.</li> </ul>
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### III. Seguridad

QUESTION	ANSWER	ISSUES
<p>A. Nararamdaman nyo ba na kayo ay ligtas mula sa karahasan at sa ano mang porma ng pang-aabuso sa loob ng kulungan? Kung hindi, bakit?</p>	<p>Safety is not an issue because they respect each other although sometimes there are conflicts but fortunately it is resolve right away.</p>	
<p>B. Mayroon ba kayong alam or may mga karanasan ba kayo na pang-aabusong pisikal o sekswal (i.e.</p>	<p>Two of the trans women experienced sexual abuse. One of them answered “Yes, I experienced sexual abuse.</p>	

<p>paninilip, abusadong pananalita, diskriminasyon, isolation) mula sa isang officer, kasamang bilanggo, o mga bisita? Paano ito tinugunan ng mga opisyal ng kulungan? (kung wala – tumuloy sa sunod na tanong)</p> <p>C. Kung may nangyari na karahasan o pang-aabuso sa loob ng kulungan, alam nyo ba kung kanino magrereklamo at kung ano ang proseso?</p> <p>D. Pag may nagkasala sa kulungan, ano ang klase ng parusa ang pinapataw? (ipaliwanag ang uri ng parusa, pag search sa selda o sa katawan etc)</p> <p>E. Ano ang pinakamaigting na takot mo bilang isang LBT sa kulungan?</p>	<p>That was during my first two months in jail when one of the prisoner showed me an extraordinary concern which I did not believe that he expects something in return for the good he has done. Weeks after, that prisoner blocked me out of the bathroom, startled me with an improvised knife and raped me, out of fear I did nothing.”</p> <p>One of them also experienced being peeked in the bathroom.</p> <p>Since none of the participants reported any abuse within the jail, none of them mentioned the possible actions to take if abuse does occur.</p> <p>There are punishments inside the jail. For minor offense is pumping and jumping jack for a thousand times and restriction for major offense. Restriction prohibits an inmate from going out of the cell and accepting visitors.</p> <p>None, because they are wholly accepted inside and outside the jail.</p>	
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#### IV. Pangangailangang Kalusugan

QUESTION	ANSWER	ISSUES
<p>A. Ano ang nakukuha nyo na serbisyong medikal sa loob ng kulungan? Anong klaseng gamot at anong serbisyo?</p>	<p>There is a clinic inside the jail premise but medicine is not always available.</p> <p>There are also organizations who visits and conducts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Unavailability of medicine</li> </ul>

<p>B. Naranasan nyo na bang magkasakit sa loob ng kulungan? Anong klaseng sakit at paano ito natugunan?</p> <p>C. Natutugunan ba ang inyong pangangailangang pangkalusugan bilang babae, halimbawa sanitary napkins, gamut sa dysmenorrhea, myoma at iba pa?</p> <p>D. Na-eexamine ba kayo ng doctor o nars sa kulungan? Gaano kadalas at ano ang kanilang kasarian?</p>	<p>medical missions who gives free medicine.</p> <p>One of the participant answered, “fortunately no, but in times of illness, we still need to get a court order allowing us to go to the hospital and undergo check-up.</p> <p>There are available sanitary napkins which can be bought at the COOP located inside the jail premise.</p> <p>There are also organizations who visits and gives free toiletry.</p> <p>Sometimes they asked their visitors to bring them sanitary pads.</p> <p>Not all the time, there are scheduled check-ups but free medicine are only good for 2 days. They have a female nurse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Expensive than the usual price</li> <li>● Keeping numerous pads is prohibited inside the cell</li> <li>● Insufficient medicine supply</li> </ul>
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#### IV. Pangangailangan sa Pamilya

QUESTION	ANSWER	ISSUES
<p>A. Tanggap at alam ba ng pamilya mo na ikaw ay LBT? Nakakaapekto ba ang iyong pagiging LBT sa relasyon mo sa pamilya?</p> <p>B. Sa mga may anak, kapatid, pamilya sa labas ng kulungan, paano nakaapekto ang inyong pagkakulong sa inyong pamilya? Sa inyong pagiging ina?</p>	<p>Most of the participants are well accepted in the family.</p> <p>One of the participant said that her situation affects the emotional being of her mother. As much as she wanted to see her mother, she just chose not to, because she is worried that her deaf mother might be hit by</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Their families are unable to visit them due to financial constraints.</li> </ul>



<p>C. (Para sa mga ina) Paano mo tinutugunan at nagagampanan ang iyong pagiging ina sa mga malayong anak? Regular mo bang nakakausap at nakikita ang inyong mga anak at pamilya?</p> <p>D. Anong pangangailangan mo ang hindi natutugunan?</p>	<p>vehicles.</p> <p>None of the participants have children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seeing their family Seldom only. Most of them was last visited for a long time ago.</li> <li>● Having a better living inside the jail In spite of the fact that the life there is really hard, they have no choice but to continue living and strive hard to survive everyday life. Some of them accepts “Labada”, sells barbeque chorizo and any other form of small business just to gain profit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Financial constraints</li> <li>● Envious inmates to their small businesses</li> </ul>
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<p>Other concerns</p>	<p><u>Handling of case</u></p> <p>One of the inmates raised her problem about her case, for how many years of imprisonment, her case is still in Pre-trial with 25 resetting.</p> <p>Her lawyer gives no guarantee if she can still be freed from jail or not.</p> <p>Slow justice system.</p>
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## VI. Pangwakas at Paglikha ng Sining

Each participant was given a piece of cloth where they can illustrate/draw the things that give them hope and reason to continue fighting their battles inside the jail. The participants illustrated the following which is written hereunder as follows;

- Family and Church
- Family, church and their home

- Family, church and her dream car
- Family, friends and Crucifix
- Family, house, sea, and boats
- Family, Rice Field and Church
- Family, church and Sea

There is no doubt that the participants draw strength from GOD and their families. They are hoping to have their case dismissed to go home and spend time with their families.

### **Consolidated Life Experiences of LBT Women in Butuan City Jail**

During the declaration of war on drugs of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, the anti-illegal drug operations in Caraga strengthens their enforcement with the objective to make Caraga a “drug-free” region, including Butuan City. As a result, the Butuan City Jail is populated with inmates involved in drug cases including LBT Women.

Based on the FGD, most participants admitted to have used drugs, but not on the day they got arrested by the police. They said it was not fair to have been accused with wrong cases. One of them shared about being physically abused by the arresting officers during operation. There is also one participant who is in prison for almost a year without the knowledge of his family. Sometimes, they are being treated or considered less of a human because of their lawlessness. Some of them are barely fed or given small rations of food and water. The topmost complaint of the participants is about the slow justice system.

Nevertheless, Person Deprived of Liberty (PDL) are not just inmates who are known to have committed acts against the law but are also people who wanted to change their lives and contribute to the welfare of the society. There are inmates who undergo fasting which they call “Fasting Friday” where they skipped having lunch to save the allocated meal budget in order to finance their proposed fundraising projects. Last 2017, they have gathered a total of *Thirty thousand pesos* (P 30,000) and made donations to the Marawi victims. On June 2019, they have donated school supplies for the inmates’ children. There are also livelihood programs for inmates which helped them gain profit to somehow finance their daily plight.

Person Deprived of Liberty (PDL) are doing their best to be a better person. Most of them are looking forward to get back at home and be reunited with their families. Their only request is to hasten the justice system.